

April 2013



Elizabeth Goolsby
Fayetteville VAMC Director

Director's Forum

by Elizabeth Goolsby

Fayetteville Priority - Access to high quality, safe patient care and service

Recent stories in the news have featured information on the care of PTSD patients and prescription practices for those with chronic pain management. Some stories have suggested patients with PTSD should not be prescribed opiates and benzodiazepines and that VA patients are prescribed these at a rate higher than other young adult males. I think it is safe to assume the other young adult males referred to may not have not seen combat or experienced the rigors of military service.

It is very difficult to say all Veterans should be medicated the same as non-Veterans when the cause for the PTSD can be very different. Our Veterans with PTSD may have other conditions such as Anxiety disorders, Panic Disorders, Phobic Disorders in which drug combinations are very appropriate. At times, the use of benzodiazepines is for a short time while awaiting other medications to take effect. The close patient provider relationship our patients enjoy help to determine what is best for each individual.

Chronic pain management is another hot topic of much discussion with our Veterans. This applies to Veterans from recent conflicts as well as those more remote in time. Chronic pain might be considered an occupational hazard for many Veterans due to the nature of their former jobs. Our society, as a whole, has become one of wanting instant relief for all medical problems, especially pain.

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DIRECTOR'S FORUM

(continued)

We look for and often demand a pill to take care of our every need. However, some of our patients have significant pain from terminal illnesses such as cancer pain or chronic debilitating diseases in which pain medication is the right course of action because it is the only relief though other modalities have been tried

It has been suggested that some of our Veterans use their pain medications for purposes other than what was intended. I believe our use of the opiate medication contract with our patients, which outline the appropriate use of the medications and the consequences of not adhering to it, has been effective. There will always be some who will violate the contract but once identified as doing so, we take the appropriate actions, which may include discontinuing the prescription. It is very possible some of our patients may have obtained pain medications from several sources as there has not been a unified method to prevent this from occurring. The VA is now piloting the ability to participate in state-wide data sharing system that will allow for reporting and information sharing.

The increased use of opiates may have led to an increase in deaths due to intended or unintended overdoses. Though prescribed opiates may contribute, heroin is also an opiate and not prescribed by our providers.

What is the future for pain management, especially chronic pain, at Fayetteville?

The Pain Management Committee and Clinic have been active in providing alternative therapies to long-term opiate medications. Some of our strategies include decrease use of opiates supplemented with non-opiates, physical therapy, targeted interventional pain relief, acupuncture (coming soon), relaxation therapies such as Yoga and Tai-Chi, as well as focused imagery. Opioid Replacement Therapies are offered for Veterans who are addicted to Opiates to address the issue of addiction and to improve the quality of life.

There is no one formula that is effective for all of our patients so trying different combinations are critical for success. Perhaps the most difficult aspect of chronic pain management is finding that right combination which can only be determined by the provider and the patient working together.

We are here to provide safe, high quality, evidenced based care to Veterans and we will continue to do so following the best practices and guidelines available.



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FVAMC HOSTS NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN FORUM

On April 16, FVAMC hosted a Native American Indian Forum with area Native American Indian Tribes participating. The Forum was attended by representatives from the Coharie Tribe, Waccamaw Siouan Tribe, Lumbee Veterans Office, Lumbee Regional Development Association (LRDA) and NC Commission of Indian Affairs. The forum gave tribal representatives the opportunity to ask questions and express their Veteran's concerns to FVAMC Director Elizabeth Goolsby and her staff. The purpose of the Forum was to open up a line of communication and help establish a partnership to allow the FVAMC to better serve this specific Veteran population.

Ms. Goolsby opened the forum with updated information about the growth of the FVAMC and its Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC). Representatives from the various tribes/organizations were given the opportunity to speak. Each representative expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to meet and speak with Ms. Goolsby and VA staff. Questions about eligibility, assistance with completing applications, and benefits were asked.

VA staff presented information about the Homeless Program, Rural Health, Chemical Addiction Rehabilitation Program (CARP), travel pay and eligibility, Primary Care, and the Vet Center. Staff from Home Based Primary Care (HBPC), Agent Orange, My HealtheVet, Women's Health, Minority Veterans Program Coordinator and Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn (OEF/OIF/OND) had display tables with additional information available. Representatives from the Veterans Benefit Administration were on hand to answer questions from the Lumbee Veteran Service Office representatives who assist Veterans with completing applications. FVAMC staff was available to provide clarification on health care benefits.

The Forum helped to forge a better understanding of each other. The tribe representatives have FVAMC staff contact information they can share with their Veterans. All involved will continue to work together on outreach to the Native American Indian Veterans we serve.



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THE CLOTHESLINE PROJECT

MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA AWARENESS

BY NORMA N. FRASER & DR. SYLVIA BRANSON-ELLIS



April is recognized as National Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Military Sexual Trauma (MST) is defined as sexual assault or repeated, threatening sexual harassment that occurred during a Veteran's military service. The Clothesline Project is a visual display to raise awareness about the impact of military sexual trauma, sexual assault, and sexual abuse. Survivors decorate t-shirts in a way that reflects their experience of sexual trauma and recovery. Shirts are then hung side-by-side to 'Break the Silence' and to raise awareness of the impact of sexual trauma. Both male and female Veterans are invited to participate.

Twenty-eight Veterans participated in the FVAMC's Clothesline Project. The t-shirts were displayed under the gazebo of our Geriatric Park for two days. With a few words, some very powerful messages were conveyed. In honor of their bravery and commitment to moving forward, pictures of the decorated t-shirts are featured in this newsletter.



Every VA facility has a Military Sexual Trauma Coordinator who serves as a point person for MST-related issues. Dr. Sylvia Branson-Ellis is the MST Coordinator for our facility. Dr. Branson-Ellis can be reached at (910) 488-2120, extension 5482.



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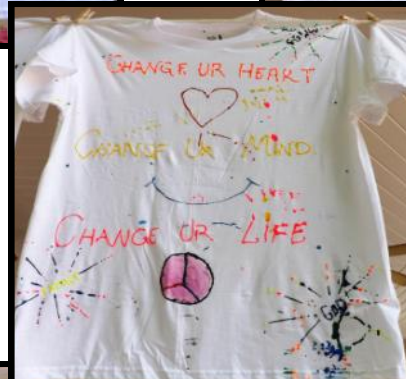


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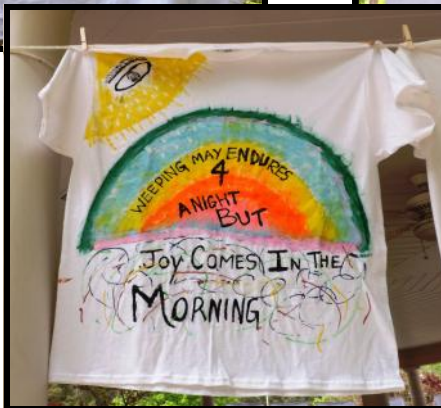
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THE CLOTHESLINE PROJECT (continued)



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THE CLOTHESLINE PROJECT (continued)



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THE CLOTHESLINE PROJECT (continued)



MST - Break the Silence!



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KUDOS & CHEERS

Cheers to the VA Medical Center. I dropped my license there and the Human Resources department mailed it to me. I was having bad thoughts about what was going on with my license, but thankfully, none of those things happened.

-M. Singleton, Fayetteville

Cheers to the Fayetteville VA Medical Center for its awesome work during Lab Week 2013.

-D. Dean, Fayetteville



Delivering Quality & Innovation in patient care

NURSES WEEK CELEBRATION

May 6-10, 2013

Monday, May 6th

Open Mic Kick Off Event	11:30am - 1:30pm	Geriatric Park
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Tuesday, May 7th

Meet & Greet	11:30am - 1:30pm	Auditorium/V-Tel
Serenity Break	9:00pm - 11:00pm	Auditorium
	2:00am - 4:00am	Auditorium

Wednesday, May 8th

Traditional White Uniform Contest	11:15am	Lobby
Pictures	11:30am	Front Steps of Medical Center
Guest Speaker/Awards Ceremony	1:00pm - 2:00pm	Auditorium/V-Tel

Thursday, May 9th

Blessing of the Hands	12:30pm - 1:30pm	Auditorium
	8:00pm - 4:00am	(Evening/Night Shift)

Friday, May 10th

Cookout*	11:00am - 1:00pm	Geriatric Park
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*Evening & Night shift tours will have food delivered.

CBOC's will have lunch provided @ their locations.



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EMPLOYEE CAREER NEWS

Organizational Health Management Committee
Management & Cultural Change Group



Did you know? Thank you to the employees that completed our questionnaire last month. Employee responses from the questionnaire revealed a 51% interest in career advancement within the VA System and 31% revealed an interest in career training for promotional opportunities.

In collaboration with Human Resources Management Service (HRMS), the Management and Cultural Change Group is creating a monthly series of career building classes as indicated below:

May 14, 2013 @11:30 in HRMS - Navigating the USA Jobs website & how to build a federal resume

June 11, 2013 @11:30 in HRMS- Classification & Qualifications

(<http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/general-schedule-qualification-standards/>) “

Additional classes will be offered based on the interest of the attendees. Please ask your supervisor if you may attend. Below are future classes that are being offered. You may view them on the FVAMC webpage: <http://vaww.visn6.va.gov/default.aspx?id=32&fac=3>

Fayetteville Events

<u>LEAD Programs Informational Meeting:</u>	Friday, May 03, 2013	1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
<u>LEAD Program Informational Meeting:</u>	Monday, May 06, 2013	10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
<u>Coaching & Mentoring Core Training:</u>	Thursday, May 09, 2013	8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Critical Conversations - Advance/VA Learning University Seminar

Please remember there is a wealth of information on career development, professional development and learning resources on the Employee Education webpage - TAKE A LOOK!:

<http://vaww.visn6.va.gov/content.aspx?id=60389>

There is another career mapping website at:

<http://mycareeratva.va.gov/about/Pages/CurrentEmployees.aspx>

This tool allows you map out your current job to jobs that you can progress to. It provides:

The title and grade of several jobs.

Lets you compare up to 3 jobs at a time.

Shows the gaps between the jobs you are in and the job you want to advance to.

Maps out the career field you selected.

List competencies and current job openings for the career path that you selected.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to serve you!!!



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LEARNING RESOURCES NEWS

Submitted by David Zentmayer

SWANK COURSES: Swank courses provide free continuing medical education (CME's) for providers and employees. To view the catalog of available courses, go to:

<http://vaww.ees.lrn.va.gov/Training/21221.pdf>

All courses are available on the VA Talent Management System (TMS).

Specialists include:

Clinical Laboratory Science
Dental
Dietetics
Environmental Management
General Staff Education
Medical Records
Occupational Therapy

Pharmacy
Physician
Physical Therapy
Psychology
Radiologic Technology
Social Work
Surgical Technology

General staff education subjects including Excel 2007, Safety, and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS's).

For more information contact David Zentmayer, Healthcare Talent Management, Supervisor Training, Coaching and Mentoring Coordinator/TMS Domain and Learning Manager, extension 7377 - david.zentmayer@va.gov

Employee Development SharePoint site for National Programs: [Employee Development](#)

VALU Education Information: www.valu.va.gov

Explore Your Career Path: www.MyCareerAtVA.va.gov



WORSHIP SERVICES
IN OUR MEDICAL CENTER CHAPEL
PROTESTANT SERVICE: SUNDAYS 2:00 pm
CATHOLIC MASS: SUNDAYS 11:00 am
MONDAY - THURSDAYS 12:00 pm
All Are Welcome! Contact us at 7031/5906



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PATIENT SAFETY - ALARM FATIGUE

Submitted by Tamara Passut, RN, MBA - Patient Safety Manager

MEDICAL DEVICE ALARM SAFETY IN HOSPITALS

Have you ever heard yourself saying (or thinking) “PLEASE STOP THE BEEPING!?” Well you’re not alone. Many medical devices have alarm systems; ECG (electrocardiogram) machines, pulse oximetry devices, blood pressure monitor, call bells, bed or chair alarms, central station monitors, infusion pumps, and ventilators to name a few. These devices are intended to get our attention however as my mother always said, “If you highlight the whole book, you haven’t highlighted anything.” According to the Joint Commission Sentinel Event Alert, Issue 50, most of the beeps are false alarms. “It is estimated that between 85 and 99 percent of alarm signals do not require clinical intervention, such as when alarm conditions are set too tight; default settings are not adjusted for the individual patient or for the patient population; ECG electrodes have dried out; or sensors are “mis-positioned.” In other words, we are highlighting too much and often the wrong things. This commonly results in clinicians turning down the volume of an alarm, turning it off, or setting limits outside of safe parameters. We can all guess where those measures eventually lead and it’s why the Sentinel Event Alert was posted by the Joint Commission. Yes, ignoring alarms, changing the settings, or turning them down/off can all lead to patient death which while not intended, may occur because clinical staff are experiencing alarm fatigue. We depend on these devices to alert us to something out of the ordinary. In order for that to be affective the alarming or “beeping” needs to truly reflect an alarming situation. I’d like to empower you to talk to your leadership and teammates, discuss ways you safely mitigate this risk and increase the likelihood that when an alarm is going off it won’t be ignored – but ran to instead!

CONTEST: Please write me at Tamara.Passut@va.gov with some processes you have to fight alarm fatigue in your area. The area with the most participation/ideas will win one of my famous gift/food baskets! Must be submitted by May 30th.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

GOLDSBORO COMMUNITY BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC: Construction continues on our Goldsboro CBOC. The new 10,000 square foot facility will provide primary care and mental health services for Veterans in and around Wayne County.



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FVAMC EARTH DAY PROGRAM



Earth Day Celebration

May 14, 2013
Auditorium - 3rd floor
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Fayetteville VA Medical Center

GEMS-Green Environmental Management Systems Program
POC: Shelley Reeder (910) 488-2120 X5699

What else will be there?

- Learn about recycling at the VA and pick up a recycling bin
- Sandhills Farm 2 Table
- Master Gardeners from NC State Univ Cooperative Extension
- Don't forget to bring your old cell phones from home for donating to **CELL PHONES FOR SOLDIERS**
- Learn how we got our Green Globes certification
- See our recent solar project that saves energy
- Learn how to properly dispose of medications at home
- Other exhibits & displays

So come and join us! **GET YOUR GREEN ON!!**



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CRIME PREVENTION TIPS

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Workplace violence can be defined as an act of aggression, physical assault, or threatening behavior that occurs in a work setting and causes physical or emotional harm to patients, coworkers, or management.

The Fayetteville VAMC prohibits any act of violence or threats of violence, including offensive physical, written, or verbal conduct that violates or threatens to violate the safety of the workplace. For the protection of the employees, any threat, explicit or implied, is presumed to constitute a statement of intent (and a violation of medical center policy), and therefore will be taken seriously. Examples of prohibited conduct include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Repeated abusive or profane language;
- ◆ Explicit or implicit threats of harm to a co-worker, patient, guest, contractor, or vendor;
- ◆ Aggressive, intimidating, or hostile behavior;
- ◆ Dangerous pranks or aggressive horseplay;
- ◆ Threats and/or verbal or physical abuse of others;
- ◆ Participating in a verbal or physical fight on medical center property;
- ◆ Possession of weapons, firearms, or explosives on medical center premises;
- ◆ Violent or threatening arguments;
- ◆ Harassment, stalking, or unwanted pursuit of patients, visitors, employees, or other community members;
- ◆ Damage, defacement, or destruction to/of medical center equipment and/or property;
- ◆ Use of the medical center or customer information to learn where employees, patients, or visitors live.

Violence in the workplace is strictly prohibited and should not be tolerated. If you are experiencing violence yourself or witness prohibited conduct, it is strongly advised that you report it immediately. For non-emergency situations complaints may be filed with your supervisor.

For all emergency situations where violence is actively taking place or if at any time you feel that your physical safety is in jeopardy, contact the VA Police immediately at 822-7922!

For violence actively occurring off station always dial 911 and ask for police assistance.



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FayettevilleVAMC](http://www.Facebook.com/FayettevilleVAMC)

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The newsletter is published by the last week of each month.

Please share your story ideas and photos with us. Enjoy!

Robin DeMark, Public Affairs Officer, (910) 488-2120 ext. 5991

www.FayettevilleNC.VA.Gov

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